

PEACE NEWS

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How Europe Sees Us will affect our future peace

by
VERA BRITAIN

On January 29 a letter appeared in *The Times* from Mr. Hugh Molson, MP, which illustrates all too clearly the type of mentality in high places—and in too many low places as well—to which is due the lack of vision and imagination betrayed by British policy throughout this war.

PART of Mr. Molson's letter runs as follows:

It is estimated that 400,000 tons of cereals have been sent by Germany into Belgium since our Government rejected Mr. Hoover's offer in June, 1941, to undertake relief in that country. The total food allowance a Belgian receives now is approximately the same as he had in the last war when Mr. Hoover was sending relief.

(This is, I believe, incorrect, since what a Belgian ration card allows and what can actually be obtained is by no means the same.)

Therefore now the Germans are supplying as much as they plus Mr. Hoover supplied in 1917. Mr. Hoover was, therefore, then relieving the German food supplies to the exact extent that he was relieving the Belgians, and we do not intend that that shall happen again.

Mr. Molson omitted to mention the quite important fact that the Allies won an overwhelming victory in the last war. Mr. Hoover's work in Belgium enabled them to do this without destroying the Belgian nation. The idea behind the very modest schemes now on foot for relieving Belgium, Greece, and France is that if the Allies can destroy their enemies without fatally damaging their friends, this is surely preferable to destroying both.

But the real significance of Mr. Molson's letter lies in its complete failure to estimate or understand psychological factors.

This school of thought (if the word "thought" can be used in such a connection) is unable to perceive any relation between the Allied blockade of Germany after the last war and the warped mentality which made Nazi propaganda so acceptable to German youth.

It fails equally to realize that the psychological reaction of European peoples to Britain's policy of starving her friends in the hope of ultimately defeating her enemies, is likely to have an adverse effect upon the post-war history of international relations for an incalculable period.

An American relief worker recently in France told me that again and again he had heard French people say: "We will help the British because we want them to win the war and get rid of Hitler. But we shall hate them for ever for letting our children starve when they could have saved them." This attitude towards us must inevitably be intensified by the contrasting sacrifices of other European peoples.

A False Impression

There seems to be a fairly general impression here that conditions in the neutral countries of Europe are better than those of the belligerents, ourselves included. Where food is concerned this is far from the truth, for the neutrals have reduced their own stocks to help the starving to the limit of their power within the blockade.

It has been stated that the Swiss are rationed for bread and cheese. They eat meat only once a week, have no rice and little macaroni. Yet this small and depleted country takes 10,000 children from France every three months for rest and feeding. American relief workers state that England is living far better than any country in Europe.

Let us look a little further into the records of other countries compared with our own.

The Turks were the first people to help the starving Greeks. The food sent by the Turkish Red Crescent fed 500,000 people daily, and is estimated

to have saved 5 to 10 per cent. of the population of Athens and the Piraeus from death. In March, 1942, regular relief began to go to Greece from Sweden, and on December 17, 1942, it was stated by Prince Carl, the Chairman of the Swedish Red Cross, that Swedish ships had so far carried to Greece 76,000 tons of Canadian wheat and 3,000 tons of other commodities.

The Swedes have also helped the Belgians in much the same way as the Swiss have helped the French, contributing £30,000 to Belgian relief, and nursing and feeding a hundred children at a time in a villa at Spa under the control of the Swedish Committee for the Relief of Belgian Children.

Children Kept Alive

In the southern districts of France, where stocks of food were completely exhausted by five million refugees from the North whom the French generously cared for in the summer of 1940, the American Friends Service Committee has helped to keep 100,000 children alive and sufficiently well to be capable of restoration to normal health should further help arrive.

When these relief workers could not get permission to bring food

through the blockade from America, they bought what they could from Central Europe, Turkey, Switzerland, Africa, and Asia until these sources were exhausted.

Letters of gratitude to the Americans flowed in from children, parents, and teachers. One from a teacher ran as follows:

At the present time when our unfortunate country seems to have no friend to count upon, this gesture of your country towards us takes on an added value. We shall all be able some day to express our gratitude for the generosity and the friendship which your great country is showing to France in these dark and troublous times we are having to traverse.

Thanks to this handful of American Friends, a considerable part of the French population has received the impression that the United States is a kind of fairy godmother to France. The Washington Government will one day have reason to thank a few Quakers for thus smoothing the path of future international relations. How long will it be before British Quakers have any such opportunity?

But the story of help given by other countries to the sufferers from our blockade does not end here.

When the American Friends could find no way to bring vitamins from the United States, a substantial donation came from Denmark in spite of her own restrictions under the Nazi occupation. Her gift enabled a distribution of Vitamin D to be made to 100,000 selected children from the three most needy French departments of Var, Gard, and Hérault.

In Marseilles a three-storied building was generously offered by the Scandinavian Seamen's Union as a rest home for children and their mothers. Powdered milk was made available for purchase by Switzerland, sardines by Portugal. Frequent communications were maintained by the American Friends with the Quaker Office in Geneva, with Secours Suisse, with the International Red Cross, with Spain, Portugal, and North Africa.

Vital to Peace

So I want to end with the question: What does Europe really think of us? Have any of our statesmen the vision to perceive that what she thinks of us will be vital to the peace, security, and welfare of our own younger generation?

It is we, living so well and frequently congratulating ourselves upon our good fortune, who do little or nothing to help the starving children to whose deaths we have contributed by our blockade. While other and poorer countries give what they can, we refuse (except to a small extent in the case of Greece) to modify our policy even for the young and helpless.

Are you who read this article willing that this situation should continue? Do you want us to be the most hated nation at the Peace Conference?

If not, see that your real sentiments are made known to every person of influence whom you are capable of reaching, before it is too late to rescue our reputation for humanity and kindness from the abyss into which it has fallen.

Two Faiths That Shake the World

A Pacifist
COMMENTARY
Edited by
OBSERVER

A HUNDRED years hence, it may appear that Gandhi's fast was as important an event in the history of the world as the turning of the tide in Russia. It may even be reckoned a more important event. And even now, a little imagination is enough to glimpse a deep significance in the fact that these two events divide between them the attention of the world.

Twelve million men locked in battle in the Ukraine; a frail old man fasting in India. Nobody knows which will make the more lasting impression on the future. Nobody doubts that the impression in either case will be profound. For there is a dynamism in both. The faith of Russia incorporated in the Red Army: the faith of India focussed on the fainting Mahatma. The British Raj, baffled, uncomprehending, embodies no dynamism, but a vast inertia: a supreme lack of faith.

Chance for Reconciliation

COULD the situation in India be really worsened one whit by the Viceroy hastening to Gandhi to convey the message of unconditional liberation, and asking for his forgiveness? It could not be worsened; and it might, by that single gesture, be immeasurably improved, lifted on to a new plane by an act of reconciliation between two persons.

The consequences of such a gesture would be incalculable: strictly incalculable. It would be foolish to pretend that by itself it would solve the infinitely complex problem of India. But it would simplify it. It would restore to his natural position of authority the one man who has some authority over the Indian masses. How

far that authority goes no-one can tell. But at present the situation is continuously deteriorating. The material authority of the Government and the moral authority of Gandhi are ranged against one another: no less than 60,000 of Gandhi's supporters are in prison. And the blame for the resultant anarchy is laid, falsely, upon Gandhi himself.

The Indian Freedom Campaign have cancelled their proposed meeting and ask instead for full support for the meeting called by the Committee of Indian Congressmen in Great Britain on Sunday (Feb. 28) advertised on p.4 of this issue.

The Russian Victory

ROSTOV (Feb. 15) and, forty-eight hours later, Kharkov—the fourth greatest city of the USSR—have fallen to the Russian armies. Though it would be foolish to suppose that the German armies are in headlong flight, or that their retreat is out of control, there is no doubt about the magnitude of the German defeat by the Russians. Compared to it, the defeat of Rommel in Libya was a parochial, "the battle of Britain" a negative affair. The frequent suggestion that in 1940, we also "took it" in the same sense that the Russian people have "taken it" since July 1941, is disingenuous, and almost repugnant. The Russian victory is of another order.

History's "Rough Justice"

BESIDE it, the defeat of the American forces in Tunisia makes a poor showing: the more particularly since Rommel was persistently reported to be on his last legs. He has dealt the African plan a very serious blow—one which can hardly fail to impose a crucial delay in the development of the Anglo-American strategy. Moreover, the delay may have profound repercussions on the Russian attitude. They must be feeling that their weight is heavy, and ours light, in the balance of power between the United Nations. The Russian sword

has been thrown into the scales; and it will take a great deal to counterpoise it.

As a manifestation of the massive and rough justice of history the event is satisfying enough. The manner, or the methods, of Russia's rebirth may not be to our liking: but a reborn Russia confronts us. Over against it, so far, we have to set the fact that the modest new Britain of the Beveridge plan is likely to be still-born.

Russia's Guarantee

NO wonder, then, that The Observer (Feb. 21) urges "an early and complete understanding between the great European land-Power of the East and Europe's island outpost of freedom, as Mr. Stalin once called it". It sounds rather like an appeal *ad misericordiam*. What should be the bases of such an understanding?

The Allies, with Russia, can guarantee the integrity of Central Europe and the democratic reconstitution of its nations as part of a European community and of nothing else; the Allies can guarantee Russia her frontiers and interests in Eastern Europe, but again only as part of the European

(Continued on page 2)

STRIKING CONTRAST

THIS week's contributions to the Fighting Fund are the lowest since the Fund began! It is vain to speculate upon the causes. But the sudden decline is in striking contrast to some of the blush-making tributes we have lately received to the quality of Peace News.

Well, well. I cannot but believe that this inglorious descent will be the spur to fresh exertion. The only way in which the blot can be expunged from the scutcheon is by making next week's contributions positively spectacular. Who said £100?

Contributions since Feb. 15: £4 5s. 5d. Total to date £4,154 3s. 10d.

THE EDITOR

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Alternative to
Chaos

THE world has now reached such a condition that (it seems) the war must go on and on (perhaps with interludes of precarious truce) until a veritable world-State, or world-federation of States, is established. What other security can there be against the repetition, in ever more violent forms, of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour? How otherwise can the prodigious development of aviation which is taking place in this war be prevented from becoming a permanent, and literally intolerable, menace to human living everywhere? What nation can trust any other nation now?

Previous to this war, though the structure of international trust had become extremely precarious, it had not entirely collapsed. People may have been fools, but in fact, even between the wars, at any rate till the last two or three years, they did go about their daily work in the faith that man-made devastation would not suddenly be vomited upon them. The crying, imperative need, in view of the new powers of scientific destruction that had been accumulated, was at all costs to strengthen the trust between nations. Instead, on all sides nations sapped the weak foundations. Instead of advancing towards generosity, they shrank back into fear. Now, the whole edifice is in ruins.

It is easy to talk of directly restoring the trust between nations. But it can happen now only by a slow process. It is of all things the hardest, in relations between individual persons, for one man really to trust another who has let him down. He may, very genuinely, forgive him; but to trust him is quite a different thing. You lend a man £50, which you can ill spare, on his undertaking to pay. He does not pay; he makes no attempt to pay. You may, let us hope you will, forgive him; but you will not lend him another £50.

What is so hard between individuals is quite impossible between nations, whose morality is necessarily on a lower level than that of individuals. Yet, without a new birth of mutual trust between nations, what are the prospects for humanity with the incredible advances in the technique of scientific destruction—above all from the air—which this war has engendered? Is homo sapiens to be compelled to become a troglodyte?

That seems too fantastic to be possible. Then what practical solution is there other than that of a world-State, or world-federation? However much the pacifist may deplore that such a world-State would have to be based on an overwhelming international air-force, it seems that the world, if it is to move forward at all, will move forward by that road. Nor should the pacifist forget that there would be a real justification for regarding such a force as essentially a police-force and not an army. There is a difference between these two things.

Anyhow, if the Anglo-American commitment to carry on the war until "the unconditional surrender" of the enemy is to be carried out, and is not to be the prelude to unconditional chaos, a world-State is the necessary outcome. It is not something which pacifists are called upon to advocate; it is something which will emerge as the alternative to chaos. Even if the United Nations fail to compel the enemy to unconditional surrender, still there will have to be a world-State. Its creation would be implicit in any form of practicable peace-negotiation between the belligerents. Whether peace is enforced unilaterally, or established reciprocally, the essential mechanism of a world-State will have to be created in order to guarantee it. There is no other way.

A PACIFIST COMMENTARY

community. It will not be a simple political pattern. But it must be done.

The emphases are The Observer's. But what do these big phrases mean? Is Russia likely to guarantee a democratic reconstitution of the European nations? I cannot easily imagine it. It seems that Russia's primary concern must be with Germany: and that the reconstitution of a democratic Germany will have no attractions for Russia. A Soviet Germany, on the other hand, would be worth a great deal more to her than any Anglo-American guarantee.

Britain's "Reconstruction"

THE New Statesman (Feb. 20) makes much the same appeal as The Observer. "Unless we make the appalling and improbable assumption that the European war will continue until the US forces eventually deployed on the Continent are numbered in millions, the Anglo-American contribution to military victory on land is bound to be relatively insignificant. It follows that the future in Europe depends above all else on the relations of the democracies to the Soviet Union; Britain may still have an important part to play..."

"The sooner that we can convince Europe... that we have framed and intend to execute plans for the positive reconstruction of a continent from which Fascism in all its modes has been eliminated, the sooner can we hope for that risorgimento among the enslaved workers both in enemy-occupied and enemy countries which we must promote if we hope for early or abiding peace. If we are to do that, the promises of the Atlantic Charter are insufficient; agreement in political warfare must be reached with Stalin."

Whereas The Observer talked of "democratic reconstitution," the New Statesman says "positive reconstruction." If by this it means "Communist reconstruction," Russia can look after that herself. If, as I suppose, it means

democratic-Socialist reconstruction, Britain had better show the world that such a thing is possible at home before venturing to impose it upon Europe. Or does it mean material, not political reconstruction?

Revolution?

PRECISELY here lies the extraordinary weakness of British progressive thought in the present situation. It gropes after a compromise between democracy and socialism, which does not exist in England—and which, even in the mild form of Beveridge, is quite uncertain; and it dreams of creating a revolutionary movement in occupied Europe on this Utopian basis.

One thing seems fairly certain: if there is revolution in Europe, it will be Communist. Communism has the technique of revolution; and it now has the prestige of successful revolution. New Statesman revolutions are, to my mind, pure fantasy. If there is Communist revolution, Britain and America may try to repress it by starvation. The question really is: Into the hands of what national authority will America deliver the food?

Co-operation - Eventually?

PROFESSOR John Macmurray, in a very valuable pamphlet, "The Foundations of Economic Reconstruction" (National Peace Council, 4d.) has a more hopeful way of looking at the problem.

"When we come, at the end of the war, to prepare the basis of a new life of peace, our first task will be to feed the hungry, provide for the homeless, and tend the sick. We shall have to set men to work together to restore the material fabric of civilization that we and they have destroyed. The way in which this is done will decide the meaning of the war and its further consequences. The situation can be used to perpetuate old enmities and to create new ones. But it can also be used to create a new community of Europe. This cannot be done by treaties or diplomacy. It is not the task of governments and their representatives. But people who work together for a common good in a common task—with one another for one another—tend to become one community."

Get Machine-Conscious
urges
OWLGLASS

AS a patriotic citizen, anxious to play my part in hastening the day when Christianity, Democracy, and Beveridge shall be finally established throughout the world and all nations are linked in bonds of brotherhood, each with a favourable balance of trade—in short, wishing to promote the right war-winning spirit among my fellow-countrymen, I find many people have some difficulty in deciding the relative values of persons and things.

Two recent BBC news-reports provide examples of this difficulty. One concerned the raid over London. The announcer, wishing to reassure us, laid emphasis on the fact that only residential buildings were hit.

There were some casualties, but—he added, with a perceptibly cheerful lifting of the voice—"not a single industrial building received any damage."

HERE we have the definite assertion that factories are more important than homes, and, by inference, machines are more important than persons.

No-one, I'm sure, will object to this. Victory depends mainly on machinery. What we need today (to save Christianity, etc.) is not so much flesh and blood as steel and petrol; not so much stout hearts as internal combustion.

It is of course a simple matter to rejoice when a bomb misses a local factory and hits your own house instead. For every bomb on a private house means one bomb less on a munitions factory.

BUT one must admit that the necessity of considering the safety of a local power-plant before that of one's own friends and relations may put considerable strain on one's patriotism.

One can imagine, for instance, the feelings of a woman fire-watcher who sees two incendiaries fall, one on the cottage that houses her sleeping offspring and the other on the power-house of a local assembling shop, and knows she has not time to deal with both.

Let us be lenient to human weaknesses if for a moment she hesitates between the baby and the conveyor-belt. For we do not doubt the issue. She knows that the machines are needed now, to save Christendom; whereas her baby will not be ripe for world-saving for 18 years.

No true British mother would hesitate for long. I doubt if she would even wait to toss up for it.

THE same devoted subordination of human to mechanical needs is shown, I gather,

in the occupied countries. For the other day I noted a new phrase in an announcement of the usual raids over France:—

"The people of Northern France have seen our Whirlwinds and Spitfires in action again today..."

In this apt use of the *mot juste*, delivered with an inflection of cheery congratulation, we get just that right impression of the French people as detached but gratified spectators of an entertainment got up for their benefit.

They view the display with calm approval, content only to be sure that our bombs fall upon some railway or industrial plant. The fact that themselves or their families may go up with the machinery is obviously immaterial to them. (*Ca ne fait rien.*) When Democracy is at stake, only machinery matters.

THE report went on to say that usually only goods trains are attacked, but in cases of passenger trains, the engines are the only objectives. It is true that the engine-drivers are always Frenchmen. But they would be the last to complain of that, so long as their engines, as well as themselves, are put out of action.

It is also true that most engine-drivers have wives. But though the disappearance of their husbands may cause some trifling inconvenience (*une bagatelle*), the widows are more than consoled. For they have seen our Whirlwinds and Spitfires in action again.

JUST one point slightly bothers me. In my concern for the safety of our own industrial plant and the destruction of the enemy's, I find myself compelled to rejoice in the destruction of British homes while lamenting the destruction of German homes.

For obviously, the bomb that misses a German home is more likely to hit a German factory, while the bomb that hits a British home is more likely to miss a British factory.

This causes me to feel more concern for the safety of German than of British housewives and children.

I confess I do not quite like this. Yet the logic of the situation convinces me that, like the BBC, I ought to like it.

There is some fault in instinct here, some relic of outmoded sentiment. Clearly, I am not sufficiently machine-conscious. This must be corrected. Some readjustment of diet, perhaps—or possibly injections....

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I think that is true. And I think co-operation may happen, in the long run. But before men get to the co-operative reconstruction of Europe, I fear, there will be a dreadful interim: of retribution, repression, civil war, savagery, and chaos.

Finland - Test Case?

AS the Russian advance continues, the problems emerge. The Stockholm correspondent of the New York Times sends a definite report that Finland has decided to sue direct to Russia for peace (Times, Feb. 23). On the face of it this is more substantial than a mere rumour. If it is true, it may mark the beginning of the end of the European war.

Much would depend on the terms which Russia would concede. If they were broadly based on Stalin's declaration of last November, which promised "inviolability of national territories", with of course strategic rectifications—the Finns are reported to be considering the surrender of a slice of the Karelian isthmus, well below Viborg, and Petsamo—the psychological effect on Germany's satellites would be considerable. Finland is, however, a case apart. No-one would compare her exemplary democracy with the corrupt oligarchies of Hungary and Rumania.

The real crux is food. Who will feed Finland, if Germany will not? Russia cannot. The duty obviously falls on USA and Britain. If Russia's reply is: "We will make peace with you, but we cannot feed you"—which is the best that can be expected—will USA and Britain fill the breach in spite of the sacrifice involved? If so, there may be a gleam of hope for the world.

Yugoslavia's War

TURN to Yugoslavia. Gen. de Gaulle, one day, confers upon Gen. Mihailovitch, the reputed head of the national resistance in Yugoslavia and War Minister of the Government in exile, the cross of war with vermillion palms. A day or two after, the Soviet Government sends a note to the Yugoslav Government in London formally accusing Gen. Mihailovitch of collaborating with the Axis (D. Herald, Feb. 18). It appears that Mihailovitch's Chetniks are devoting more energy to fighting the Partisans, communist-peasant revolutionaries, than to fighting the Italian troops; on the contrary, his Chetnik commanders, if not himself, have come to an understanding with the Italians. Only the partisans continue the fight against the occupying forces.

"Recently Gen. Mihailovitch has apparently been eager to conserve his forces. Very sensibly he wants his men to be there to fight another day, should British and American troops land in the Balkans (News Review, Feb. 18)." One does not need a rat-smelling nose to suspect that the forces are being conserved for quite another purpose—to repress the peasant-revolutionaries. That is, apparently, what Russia thinks.

Change in Russia

AND that probably will prove to be the most positive clue to the puzzle everywhere in Eastern Europe: the effort of everyone to have an army on the spot, "to restore order", when the disintegration comes. King Boris of Bulgaria hopes to get out of his predicament by his army (Times, Feb. 19).

Even in Russia itself, says Negley Farson (Daily Mail, Feb. 18) "a very significant change is taking place. What we commonly thought of as the USSR is now virtually the realm of the Red Army. To a much greater degree than the Reichswehr generals ever achieved or will achieve, the Red Army does now hold the future of Soviet Russia in its hands. For that reason the Red Army will be particularly careful not to destroy itself... The Red Army is weighing the lives of its soldiers in the balance—for these men are now the real power in Russia."

But Mr. Farson goes on to show that the Red Army is, in grain, a politically conscious army—"the strongest political force in Europe." "The Red Army is a thinking army" (Times, Feb. 22). It is an important point. What has either Britain or America to put up against that? The political consciousness of a democracy is necessarily at odds with military organization. Is the British Army a thinking army?

Communist Sausages

IF only because of my occupation, I am seldom short of reading matter on a railway journey. But on this day I was. So I picked up a copy of the Labour Monthly from the bookstall to see how the Communists were getting on. Pretty well, numerically, seeing that there are now 64,000 party members; but in the matter of style worse than ever. Your true Communist writes "no language". His articles are so many yards of uniform grey bread sausage—nortentious and solemn. Palma Dutt and Harry Pollitt are very different people; but both produce the same amorphous jargon. There is not a smile or a vivid phrase from beginning to end of this forbidding organ of Communist orthodoxy.

"The sober fact is that the question can only be seriously approached in the light of the experiences arising out of the present situation and in this light alone can one successfully formulate any future perspective." That happens to be Harry Pollitt; and the subject is Communist affiliation to the Labour Party. But it might as well be anybody else, and the subject quite different. Probably the grey nothingness comes of not daring to deviate from the party-line. It's a bad advertisement.

Neither the Peace Pledge Union nor Peace News itself is necessarily committed to views expressed in the articles we publish. (Still less does the acceptance of advertisements imply endorsement of any views expressed or implied therein or PPU connection with the matter advertised). Contributions are welcomed, though no payment is made. They should be typewritten, if possible, and one side only of the paper should be used. They may not be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed, nor can we undertake to acknowledge all correspondence owing to increased cost of postage.

WORDS OF PEACE — 9

Law for States

THE House knows that for forty years at least I have endeavoured to teach my fellow-countrymen an opinion and doctrine which I hold, namely that the moral law is intended, not for individual life only, but for the life and practice of States in their dealing with one another. I think that in the present case there has been a manifest violation both of international law and of the moral law, and therefore it is impossible for me to give any support to it.

John Bright,

House of Commons, 1882,
on resigning from Mr.
Gladstone's Government
on the bombardment of
Alexandria.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

MR. George Ausden's "Pacifism and Politics," a pamphlet published by the Aylesbury PPU Group (A. W. Page, 48 Regents Rd., Aylesbury; 2d.), is a useful contribution to the recent and still continuing discussion in these columns.

Personally, I should not accept his axiom that "Pacifism is the complete rejection of the use of violent or coercive methods in any circumstance of human life." Pacifism, to me, is quite compatible with the acceptance of the element of coercion implicit in all extant forms of organized society.

On the other hand, I would accept Mr. Ausden's conclusion that "pacifists enter politics, not to attain control of the State, but to limit the authority of the abstract State in order that we may increase the actual power of the common will of the people."

* * *

"The Future of Agriculture and Industry," by Britannicus (Industrial and Social Order Council of the Society of Friends; 4d.), advocates the decentralization and de-urbanization of industry clearly enough. The positive agricultural policy is not so clear: especially on the financial side.

Who, for example, is to provide the immense capital outlay required for the re-equipment of British farms? Probably the author has his own clear idea. But he might have been more explicit. And what precisely does he mean by the State organizing "collective buying at guaranteed prices"? Does guarantee imply subsidy, or not?

J.M.M.

Be Practical!

THE Peace Pledge Union has one clear-cut idea only—renunciation of war. What to do when the disturbed millions return to civil life is beyond its ken. Some members even say that is no concern of ours.

It is time the National Council put on its thinking cap and thought out a pacifist policy and programme. Then, by means of Peace News, pamphlets and public meetings, we ought to proclaim our gospel for saving mankind.

Mr. Attwood (in his letter in your issue dated Feb. 12) thinks it will take us till the year 4000 to make twice our present number of converts. I do not agree. In three years the militarists have made this indolent, peace-loving nation a determined first-class fighting machine.

Why? Because the militarists believe in their doctrines. If pacifists can evoke the same sublime faith in their doctrines and can show how they can be made practical, converts will come quickly enough to surprise even the optimists.

But we must be practical.

ALBERT LEAPER

473 Endike Lane, Hull.

STUART MORRIS

The statement which appears below (and which is based on a resolution, passed by the Peace Pledge Union at its meeting on Jan. 23) was issued to the press when the official announcement concerning the trial of Stuart Morris was made public on Feb. 16. But the press did not publish it. Thus the public has no knowledge of the attitude taken by the National Council of the PPU towards Stuart Morris's action. The Editor of Peace News therefore considers it his duty to publish the statement for the information of the movement and the public.

OWING to the fact that the trial was held in secret, the Council is not in possession of the defence offered by Stuart Morris. From the facts before it, when the matter was discussed at its last meeting, it considered that his action has been both improper and indiscreet, and, while not suspecting him of any unworthy motive, wishes it to be known that he acted entirely on his own initiative and without the knowledge or consent of the Council and officers of the Union.

VISAS FOR JEWISH CHILDREN

Mr. Eden, the Foreign Secretary, told the House of Commons on Feb. 3 that he had no knowledge of visas for this country being refused for 2,000 Jewish children in France. He added (according to the Evening News):

It is much to be deplored that any story to this effect should be in circulation. It has no basis in fact.

What are the Facts?

THE "irresponsible" people who set this story in motion appear to be Sir Andrew McFadyen, who was General Secretary to the Reparations Commission (1922-24), and of the Dawes Commission (1925), and Mr. Hannen Swaffer, the journalist. Sir Andrew wrote to the Daily Telegraph on Jan. 6 and said:

A few weeks ago a deputation to the Home Secretary appealed for permission for the entry of 2,000 children from Vichy France. The request was unconditionally refused, partly on the ground that it might cause an "outburst" of anti-Semitism here. That is a slander on the British people. News had just been received that 2,000 children, from two years of age upwards, deported from Vichy France in cattle-trucks, half were dead on arrival at their destination and the rest were dying.

Mr. Swaffer wrote in The People on Jan. 17 an account of the deputation to the Home Office, which, he stated, took place on Oct. 28, saying:

They made a very modest appeal. While 5,000,000 Jews in Europe are on the verge of extermination, they asked for visas for a maximum of 2,000 Jewish children in hourly peril of deportation... Yet—would you believe it?—the humane plea was turned down!

In World's Press News, Feb. 11, Mr. Swaffer spoke of Mr. Eden's denial of the story and added:

"I have before me as I write what was on my desk when I wrote The People article—a detailed statement by a member of the deputation to the Home Office, a person whose word the Commons would accept as unimpeachable. The statement included these words:

"Morrison addressed us for three-quarters of an hour by the clock—the dustiest, departmental brief I

have heard from any Minister—and refused our demand outright. The only 'reasons' I could extract from his long, dusty, and quite inhuman speech were:

"1. Such action would arouse anti-Semitism in this country (!!!)..."

"2. We have already helped and 'harboured' 79,000 refugees. The more we help the more Hitler may torture. There is no end to this thing..."

"I don't think I have ever seen a deputation so outraged by a ministerial reply in my life (and I have a long experience of them)..."

"We were unable to give publicity to this matter as we should have liked, as we feared to defeat our own object by (1) closing the trap in France on the victims and (2) causing the South American republics to whom we were appealing to say: 'What are your own Government doing? They will not even admit 2,000 children. Get their help before you come to us'."

Hannen Swaffer adds that his statement in The People has not been refuted by any member of the deputation which, he says, included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Hinsley, the Moderator of the Free Churches, Arthur Greenwood, David Grenfell, Eleanor Rathbone, Harold Nicholson, Victor Cazalet, W. W. Astor, Lady Violet Bonham-Carter, and the organizers of many relief organizations.

In the light of this information Mr. Eden's statement is, to say the least of it, peculiar. But the damage has been done now.

Geoffrey Pittock-Buss

V for — What?

THE victory of the Allied Nations is being widely discussed, but neither among the people nor their rulers is there the faintest agreement as to what this victory would mean. It possesses, in fact, a chameleon-like quality that is very disconcerting.

To all the communistically inclined, the issue seems to resolve itself into an extension of the Russian system throughout the world. To humanitarians in general it stands for an ideal of freedom for all which could, in practice, only be achieved by the abolition of all government.

Those of a democratic turn of mind, complacently contemplate a ruined, war-ravaged, and famine-stricken world as the firm foundation on which American and British capital is to erect the New Jerusalem—presided over by the United Nations Air Force.

All these conceptions are mutually exclusive, so that the most probable result of "victory" would seem to be a war to maintain peace.

LENA ROBERTS

9 Mount Beacon, Bath.

Nationalism and Peace

Dr. J. G. Jones, who fallaciously equates nationality with nationalism, supposes that international peace is obtainable by an adjustment of imports and exports. But not one in a thousand of the various patriots (British, German, Russian, etc.) now engaged in mutual destruction has the faintest interest in the "balance of trade," though nearly all have from infancy been well impregnated with nationalism that according to Dr. Jones should make for peace. There is no analogy between the "domestic hearth" and the world political system; nations are not individuals.

The primary demand of nationalism is adequate armaments for "national defence," and as this is of course universal, straightaway the road to war is entered by the creation of competitive slaughter-machines (involving conscription), and this is quite irrespective of "interest in international trade."

Unless Dr. Jones can dispose of these facts, he will serve no useful purpose by "getting tired" of attempts to remove the main factor of international war.

JOHN NIBB

BM/JONIB, W.C.I.

France and Freedom

According to "La Marseillaise" (Jan. 24), Peyrouton imprisoned Reynaud, Daladier, and Blum; was responsible for the first French anti-semitic laws; and interned 15,000 without trial. He boasted of being "the first Frenchman to introduce national-socialist methods into North Africa," and said, "My enemies

Letters to the Editor

Owing to the large number of claims on our severely limited space, correspondents are urged to keep their letters very brief, and preferably under 250 words.

accuse me of being Hitlerite; I am proud of it."

Michael Gardner's long letter does not comment adversely on Peyrouton's appointment as Governor of Algeria. Does he wish France to be saddled with a royalist regime, a Bonapartist one, or an openly anti-Jew and Hitlerite one, with the backing of the French imperialists, Nogues, and Giraud? If he is not a pacifist, has he forgotten that this war is supposed to be for freedom (presumably including that of the French and Arabs) and not against it? If, as Mr. Gardner alleges, Petain's and Giraud's one ambition is "the restoration of France's dignity," why do they intern trade union organizers, syndicalists, rank and file communists, and men who fought Franco? There is no dignity in brutality, race hatred, and injustice.

Our sympathy with the French and African peoples does not alter the fact that Petain and Giraud rose to power by unpacifist, unchristian, undemocratic methods; that there are 65,000 people in North African concentration camps; that the Jews there are deprived of political rights and only a limited number admitted to professions. In short, the methods of the government of North Africa are such as followers of Jesus and lovers of freedom must abhor.

RONALD S. MALLONE

53 Musgrove Rd., S.E.14.

Guinea Pigs

Homeopathy has not produced results in any way to be compared with those obtained by regular medical practice. What homeopathic remedy is as effective, for example, as the sulphonamide drugs in cerebro-spinal fever, or in pneumonia? I suggest that pacifists judge homeopathy, not by studying its history, but by comparing its effectiveness with regular medical practice—which, incidentally, the term "allopathy" certainly does not cover.

Whether or not it is wrong to allow animal experimentation is a point on which one may hold one's own opinion, but to condemn the experiments on the ground of "utter uselessness" is nonsense. (Without animal experimentation, the diabetic would not have had his insulin to keep him alive, and much valuable research on vitamins, endocrines, etc., could never have been done.)

To Mr. Maitland, I would say:

(1) Diseases like smallpox undoubtedly have been mitigated by improved social conditions (and by early and effective isolation), but inoculation makes it much less likely that the subject, if infected, will have a severe attack.

(2) Serum treatment is not fallacious. One has but to observe the effect of serum on the diphtheritic child to realize that. Better social conditions would improve, but not radically alter the present situation.

(3) Yellow fever, quite apart from the war, has always been a serious problem—especially for the unfortunate natives who took it. And it is because pacifists are more than "just pacifists" that volunteers for the inoculation experiments will come forward.

HUGH BUSH CRUM

21 Barnwell Ter., Glasgow, S.W.1.

(This correspondence must now cease, Ed. PN)

THE basis of the Peace Pledge Union is the following pledge which is signed by each member:

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER.

The address to which new signatures of the pledge should be sent, and from which further particulars may be obtained is:

PPU HEADQUARTERS,

Dick Sheppard House,

1 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

If it were Your Child

THE madness which has seized the world is finding a particularly loathsome form of expression in countries only a few miles from our shores and, although specific instances of barbarity may be questioned, it is now generally accepted that the plight of the Jewish people in occupied Europe is very terrible.

Parliament has expressed its horror and has promised that retribution shall be exacted from those responsible; it has stood in silence with bowed heads, but little or nothing has been done in the way of practical proposals which might in some way mitigate the suffering.

No offer of sanctuary in Britain has been forthcoming, and the committee of the Pacifist Service Bureau believes that one of the obstacles the Government would put in the way of this is that of lack of accommodation; another that of food shortage. The Bureau therefore proposes to draw up a list of those people who would be prepared to offer hospitality in their own homes and, if necessary, a share in the family rations, to Jewish children under 16. Having done this, we shall hope, by having the matter raised in the House of Commons, to inform the Government that 100, say, or 500, English homes are open to these victims of persecution. It is reasonable to suppose that Jewish people over 16 would be interned on entering the country: this would mean the setting up of camps and labour to run them, so the Bureau wants to have another list of those who would make themselves available for such work.

If these practical objections on the part of the authorities can be dealt with, we feel that the hope of changing what is at present a purely negative policy may be greatly increased.

Will all who feel able to help, as individuals or groups, in either of the above ways, please send their names to the Bureau at the above address, so that when opportunity offers we may have as impressive a list as possible to which to give publicity? It is realized that such offers may mean sacrifices: food is short enough, but we believe that it would be possible for some families to feed one more mouth, and groups too might arrange to do this by a system of ration pooling. Who would hesitate for a moment if their own child were in similar danger?

In this matter pacifism can be practical. Here we may have the chance of saving at least a small number of our fellow men who would otherwise perish.

JACK CARRUTHERS

PEACE BY NEGOTIATION

Under the auspices of Brighton PPU, the Rev. Richard Lee, of Coventry, spoke on Peace by Negotiation on Feb. 18 at Brighton. His main plea was that the demand for a negotiated peace should become the dominant and insistent aim of the peace movement, even though it might have little present effect on a Government obsessed by the quest for a peace by violence and dictation.

The negotiated peace would be one in which all belligerents would have an equal chance to state their demands. It must be one whose terms themselves would be a security against aggressors and "imperialist Pharisees" whether German, Italian, or British. In the long run a minority plea now for a just peace would have far-reaching effects.

THE DEBATE IS OPEN!

Let Geo. Ll. Davies, Laurence Housman, Stuart Morris, J. Middleton Murry, Reginald Reynolds, Alan Staniland, Roy Walker and Howard Whitten open your group discussion on:

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FAMINE

A STRONG plea for Allied action to save the starving children of Europe without delay was made in the first leading article in the Manchester Guardian on Feb. 16. Commenting on the survey of child life in Europe, published by the Committee of the Save the Children Fund, it said:

It is clear from the facts given in these reports that it is possible to give help in special kinds of foodstuffs and medicaments without weakening the effects of the blockade on Germany's strength, and it is urgently necessary that such help should be given. In the pressing cases of Greece and Belgium action should be taken at once.

Turning to the case of France, the article said the facts had a "terrible significance", and concluded:

Up to the present the American Friends' Service Committee has been feeding 100,000 children from supplies it had bought before 1941. Those supplies are exhausted, but money, food, and transport by neutral ships are available in America and the Red Cross and the Friends' Service Committee are prepared to arrange and supervise distribution. To refuse navicerts for this purpose would be to add wantonly to the difficulties of post-war recovery.

A statement issued by a number of American churchmen and professors on Feb. 19 appealed for the sending immediately of an American food ship with dried milk and vitamins for children, invalids, and nursing and expectant mothers in occupied Europe.

"Doctor X, a distinguished Belgian physician who has come to London to help the Belgian Government", was reported in the News Chronicle (Feb. 20) as saying that tuberculosis had spread in the proportion of five cases to one, as compared with the first year of the war. He added that Belgians "look to Britain and her Allies as the saviours who will put them on their feet again."

Official Greek circles in London have revealed (Daily Herald, Feb. 16) that, despite the arrival of relief shipments, 200 people die from starvation in Athens every day.

A large public meeting was held at Carnegie Hall, New York City, on Saturday, at which Herbert Hoover and Rufus Jones, of the Society of Friends, spoke.

HAVE YOU READ OPUS?

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Man & Woman-Power Changes

OF the man and woman-power changes recently announced, only the new Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order appears to have come into force on Feb. 22. Under this Order, women between 18 and 41, with certain exceptions, are restricted from obtaining a job except through a Labour Exchange.

George Dutch and John G. Jenkins, who served a month's imprisonment last November for refusing to register under the Civil Defence Duties (Compulsory Enrolment) Order, 1942, were prosecuted at Romford on Feb. 16 for refusing to give the necessary registration particulars after conviction.

His solicitor stated that George Dutch had been court-martialled four times in the last war, having at his fourth court-martial been sentenced to three years' penal servitude, later commuted to two years' hard labour. He had already been in prison five times on conscientious grounds, and had a fine record in peace and co-operative activities. John Jenkins had volunteered in the last war, and before being demobilized had taken a vow never again to take part in war. He had done considerable religious and social work.

A strong protest was made against prosecution on this charge, as it was stated that in fact it was virtually a second prosecution for failing to register and a legalized form of "cat and mouse" treatment. Each defendant was fined £10 with fourteen days in which to pay, with the alternative of one month's imprisonment. Neither intends to pay.

FIRE-WATCH EXEMPTION

When Humphrey S. Moore (Assistant Editor of Peace News), after registering under the Compulsory Enrolment Order of 1942, applied to the Hardships Committee at St. Albans on Feb. 2 for exemption, he put in a medical certificate and also claimed exemption on the ground that he had a conscientious objection to duties under the Order. His claim of physical unfitness was somewhat summarily dismissed, but after considerable discussion the committee accepted his conscientious objection and gave him indefinite exemption from fire prevention duties.

This is only the fourth case in which such exemption is known to have been given, the third having occurred in August 1941. The Government has been advised by its legal advisers that grounds of conscientious objection cannot be regarded as constituting exceptional hardship.

On two summonses for absents himself from duty as a member of the National Fire Service, Sidney Tomlinson, of Highgate, was sentenced at Clerkenwell last week to 2 months hard labour. Asked why he absented himself from duty he replied (according to the Islington Gazette) that "he had been in an undecided frame of mind. He went into the Fire Service rather than go to prison or break the law, but the strain on his conscience was too much."

A member of the Gloucester Land Scheme, Thomas Carlisle, was to appear at the Gloucester Quarter Sessions on Tuesday of this week on a charge of refusing medical examination. Refusing to answer a summons to Gloucester police court on Feb. 12, he had been arrested and remanded till Feb. 6 when, however, he had refused to plead.

Declaring (according to the Hendon Times, Feb. 12) "that she considered it her duty to use every opportunity of voicing her convictions" against compulsion for war purposes, Joan Demster, of Warwick Av., Edgware, told the Hendon magistrates on Feb. 8 that she would not pay a fine of £20 they imposed on her for failing to register for national service. She went to prison for a month.

For some time the Methodist Peace Fellowship and Christian Pacifist Forestry and Land Units have had a scheme for knitting socks from sea boot wool for members in agriculture or forestry, and this is now being widened to include any C.O.s engaged on this work. Readers willing to help with knitting or knowing of workers requiring socks, should write for full particulars to Mrs. Joan Armstrong, c/o C.P.F. and L.U., 1st Floor, Kingsway Hall, London, W.C.2.

With the Feb. issue, now out, the Central Board of C.O.s celebrates the third birthday of its Bulletin (6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1; 3d.)

LETTERS - cont'd from page 3

P A X

IN your leading article in the issue of Feb. 12 you very truly state that the death of Eric Gill has robbed of a leader those of us who regard industrial mass-production as incompatible with human dignity and therefore a menace to society. Equally true would appear to be your observation that many ordinary men and women, unable to speak with the voice of a Carlyle, a Ruskin, a Morris, or a Gill, share the same conviction.

It may interest your readers to know that Pax (whose hon. secretary is Stormont Murray, Green End, Radnage, High Wycombe), is profoundly interested in this subject. We endeavour to carry our pacifism beyond a mere opposition to war to a constructive effort for "the things that make for peace," and in the matter of industrialism to carry on in our small way the work of Eric Gill, a former chairman of this society.

HUBERT GRANT SCARFE.

Chairman of Pax.

Common Law Parliament

I was horrified and disgusted to read in the columns of our PN remarks of such wanton malice and reckless lack of fairness as those about Mr. Robert J. Scrutton and his People's Common Law Parliament movement. The indecent anxiety shown therein to induce pacifists to have nothing to do with Mr. Scrutton or his movement arouses in me—for one—the gravest suspicion.

After telling us that one of Mr. Scrutton's statements is so vague as to be meaningless, the writer goes on to say there is no historical justification for it! How could a meaningless statement have or NOT have a historical justification? And on what does the writer base his singularly presumptuous categorical statement that "no good purpose" is served by a movement that has a number of very successful struggles with what has been well called "administrative lawlessness" (i.e. bureaucratic tyranny) to its credit, not to mention a number of fearless exposures of scandalous abuses, corruptions, and injustices that would never in a score of kalpas be allowed to reach the public through the ordinary channels of the kept press? Is this his idea of "no good purpose"?

I have no connection whatsoever with Mr. Scrutton's movement, but I have taken the trouble to find out something about it and its achievements, and I am unable to find any reason whatsoever in any of its aims as set out by its leader why a pacifist should not belong to it, and a great many why he should.

KAIKHOSRU SHAPURJI SORABJI

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LITERATURE, &c.

QUAKERISM. Information and literature respecting the Faith and Practices of the Religious Society of Friends from an association to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

MEETINGS, &c.

COVENTRY will dance 'neath a waxing moon on Mar. 13. Turn over your silver to the Soiree at Stoke Congregational Hall. Entertainment from 6.30.

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LIVERPOOL. Unity Cafe, Williamson St., off Church St. "The Rise and Fall of the British Empire," G. Lloyd Phelps, Mar. 6. Two sessions, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Merseyside Region.

LUNCH HOUR address, Friends' House, Euston Rd., N.W.1, Mar. 2, at 1.20. The Rev. Henry Carter, "Significance of the Scott and Uthwatt Reports."

ROBERT SPEIGHT, dramatic recital, Kingsley Hall, Powis Rd., Bow, Sat., Mar. 6, 7.30 p.m., admission 6d. (Charing Cross to Bow Rd. 4d. District Railway).

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